

214
DISCOURSE

Sal Jackson
CONCERNING

THE PROCESS OF THE
GENERAL JUDGMENT.

IN WHICH

The modern Notions of *Universal Salvation*
are particularly considered.

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*Behold, I come quickly; and my Reward is with me,
To give every Man according as his Work shall be.*
The SUPREME JUDGE.

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MATTHEW XXV. 31---46.

When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations : And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an-hungered and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in: Naked and ye cloathed me : I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an-hungered and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and cloathed thee? Or when saw we thee sick or in prison and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed,

into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an-hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger and ye took me not in: Naked and ye clothed me not: Sick and in prison and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an-hungred, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

IT is the intention of this discourse, to explain and confirm the sense of this passage of scripture. And since scripture is the best interpreter of itself, we shall compare the various representations in the text, with the general tenor of the sacred oracles.

I. Our Lord here gives us a particular and lively representation of the general judgment. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations, &c." This description of the great day resembles that of several other inspired

writers. Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of it, saying. "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all." Solomon says, "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." The apostle Paul declares that "God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." We are told the fallen angels are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." And the apostle John beheld in vision this great, and glorious, and solemn scene. "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." These declarations are too explicit to need any comment; they literally speak the language of the text, and confirm the representation it gives of the general judgment: Which is also agreeable to the nature and apprehensions of mankind, as well as the character of the Deity, and the present dispensations of divine providence.

It is, in the first place, perfectly consonant to the nature of men as moral agents. They are endued with perception, reason, memo-

ry, conscience, and all the powers and faculties which are requisite to moral agency. And being moral agents, they are proper subjects of law and moral government. The Supreme Being therefore will treat them but according to their nature, to call them to an account for all the deeds done in the body, and give them a just recompense of reward. Hence every man carries in the very frame and constitution of his nature an irresistible evidence of a future judgment.

Accordingly, this is agreeable to the natural apprehensions of mankind. As they are sensible they lie open and naked to the view of the omniscient God, so they naturally expect he will call them to an account for all the inward motions and exercises of their hearts, as well as outward actions of their lives. The man who embrues his hand in the blood of his fellow-creature, though concealed from every other eye but the omniscient, has a secret fearful apprehension of the righteous judgment of God. And, though he is neither accused nor suspected of his crime, yet his own conscience binds him over to the judgment of the great day. This is the secret voice of nature, which has discovered itself on many occasions. The Barbarians, when they saw the viper on Paul's hand, "Said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." The mariners in the ship with Jonah, when

they found themselves in danger of perishing by a mighty tempest, " Said, come let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is come upon us." And when Joseph's brethren were thrust into prison, and subjected to great and unexpected misfortunes, they immediately recollect their cruel and unnatural treatment of their brother, as the procuring cause of their present calamities. " They said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: Therefore is this distress come upon us." All men thus feel the natural connection between moral evil and physical, between sinning and suffering, between guilt and punishment. Hence every man's conscience presages a future day of retribution, when he must give an account of himself to God, as the supreme and final Judge.

And this is further confirmed by the rectitude of the divine character and government. Since the Author of Nature is infinitely holy, just and good, he must necessarily conduct agreeably to these divine attributes in the government of moral beings, and dispense rewards and punishments according to their respective characters. The present state of things, however, clearly evinces that the day of retribution is yet to come. Here, as Solomon observes, all things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and the wicked, and no man knoweth either love or

hatred, by the present dispensations of divine providence towards him. But as things cannot always continue so under the administrations of a Being of perfect rectitude, so the present state of the world is a clear demonstration of a future general judgment, when the Supreme Being will review the conduct of all his intelligent creatures, and reward the righteous and punish the wicked according to their works.

II. Our Lord speaks of one distinction in the characters of men, which will absorb all other distinctions, and divide the world into two classes at the last day. "Before him shall be gathered all nations: And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, &c.—For I was an-hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, &c.—For I was an-hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: Naked, and ye clothed me not: sick and in prison, and ye visited me not."

In many respects the righteous and the wicked resemble each other. They are often alike as to their natural powers and abilities. In this view, Absalom, Joab, and Ahitophel resembled Moses, David, and Solomon. There is also a resemblance in their natural tempers and dispositions. Absalom and the young man in the gospel, were perhaps, in this respect, as amiable as Moses, or the beloved disciple who leaned on Jesus' breast. These, and many other circumstances, which arise from birth, rank, fortune, religious denominations, &c. are common both to the righteous and the wicked, and will not characterise mankind at the last day. But there is a difference in the **HEARTS** of men, which forms a capital distinction in their characters, and will finally place some on the right, and some on the left hand of their Judge. And this is the distinction, which our Lord here mentions and describes. He represents the righteous as possessed of that divine love and charity, by which they sought the glory of God and the good of their fellow creatures in all their actions. But he represents the wicked as actuated by a low, mean, mercenary, contracted disposition, which confined all their views and pursuits to their own good. Both these dispositions are described by the apostle Paul. His description of charity or divine love is in these words. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not

charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." So says our Lord in the text: But the description continues. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, *seeketh not her own*, &c. Whereas the contrary disposition, the apostle says, makes "men lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God." Heat and cold, light and darkness cannot be more diametrically opposite in their nature and effects, than these two dispositions are. And since all mankind are governed by one or the other of these two principles of action, so there is an essential distinction in their characters, which justly denominates them all either righteous or wicked. Accordingly we find the scripture every where takes notice of this capital distinction in the characters of

men, and marks it by such discriminating epithets as these—the godly and the ungodly—the holy and the unholy—the just and the unjust—saints and sinners—the friends of God and the enemies of God—the children of light and the children of darkness—the children of God and the children of the devil.

As this distinction is of great importance, and closely connected with the subject before us, we shall consider it a little more particularly.

The Supreme Being, in the course of providence, hath acknowledged and paid a visible regard to this distinction between the righteous and the wicked. In describing the character of Noah, he represents him as essentially different from the rest of mankind at that day, “God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt: For all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth:—And the Lord said unto Noah, come thou, and all thy house into the ark: For thee have I seen *righteous* before me in this generation.” Here God distinguished the *righteous from the wicked*, and, to exhibit a public and visible regard to this distinction, he saved the righteous and destroyed the wicked.

He likewise asserted and vindicated the distinguishing character of Job. “The Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that

feareth God and escheweth evil." The great accuser of the brethren disputed the truth of this divine declaration. "Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands; and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." As if he had said, There is nothing singular in the character of Job. He conducts no otherwise than any other person would in the same situation. Let any other man receive equal tokens of thy love and favour, and he will make equal returns of gratitude and obedience. Sinners love those that love them. He is, like all other men, entirely governed by mercenary motives. Therefore only touch his interest, and strip him of those peculiar favours thou hast lavished upon him, and he will drop the mask, discover his hypocrisy, and curse thee to thy face. To wipe off these aspersions from Job's character, and to convince Satan that he acted from truly noble, disinterested motives, God gives him leave to try him with any afflictions or calamities short of death. Satan with pleasure makes the experiment. He brings a train of evils upon Job in thick succession. He strips him of his wealth. He slays his servants. And, to close the scene, he rends from his heart the dear objects of

his affections, by the sudden and surprizing death of his children: Thus he tumbles him, in a moment, from the summit of human glory into the depths of human woe, Here is a fair trial. And what is the effect? Does he curse God as Satan predicted, and as an unholy, unsubmitive heart would naturally prompt him to do under such a severe, corrective stroke? Nothing more remote. "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Here is, as far as can be, a visible demonstration of the essential difference between nature and grace, between a saint and a sinner.

On another very memorable occasion, God explicitly acknowledged the reality and importance of this distinction. He had resolved to destroy Sodom. But previously to the execution of this design, he revealed his purpose to Abraham, who immediately breaks forth into the most fervent intercession for those miserable objects. And this is the language in which he addresses the Most High. "Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee to do, after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: And that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee, shall not

the Judge of all the earth do right? God graciously replies to this, and his repeated importunity, that if he found fifty, or forty-five, or forty, or thirty, or twenty, or even ten righteous persons in the city, he would spare the whole place for their sakes. And when neither of these numbers could be found, he delivered just Lot, as a standing monument that the Judge of all the earth would do right. Such are the public, visible, striking testimonies, which God himself hath borne to the distinction between the righteous and the wicked.

David mentions and describes this distinction almost in every psalm. It may suffice to quote the first as a specimen of the rest. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the *ungodly*, nor standeth in the way of *sinners*, nor sitteth in the seat of the *scornful*. But his delight is in the law of God; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper. The *ungodly are not so*: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the *ungodly shall not stand in the judgment*, nor *sinners* in the congregation of the *righteous*: but the way of the *ungodly shall perish*." If it be said, this psalm refers to Christ, it is sufficient to observe that there is no evidence of it, from any description of his person or

character, nor from any part of it being applied to him in the new-testament.

The book of Proverbs is, in a manner, one continued contrast between the righteous and the wicked.

The declarations of Christ on this head deserve special attention and regard. His sermon on the mount contains a beautiful description of the discriminating characters of the righteous. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: For they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: For they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: For they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: For they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: For they shall see God." That Christ here intends to distinguish saints from sinners, in respect to the inward motions and affections of their *hearts*, is not only evident from the description itself, but from the observation which he immediately subjoins. "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." And in the conclusion of this chapter, he more particularly describes the nature and essence of the distinction, which he had before been speaking of. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto

you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye; do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only; what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Our Lord here represents the children of God as bearing his divine image, and possessing his divine spirit, which distinguishes them from the rest of mankind, who are utterly destitute of such a holy and heavenly temper. And in his conference with Nicodemus, he points out the source from whence they derive this special grace, and who it is that makes them to differ. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh: and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit: marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again."

We have only to add the testimonies of the apostles to this important distinction. St. Paul declares, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Again, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new crea-

ture: Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." And he represents saints as distinguished not only from sinners, but from themselves whilst in a state of nature, by the special influences of the divine Spirit. "And you hath he *quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom we all had our conversation in times past; in the lust of our flesh, and of the mind: And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." And in another place, after mentioning a catalogue of the blackest characters, he reminds the saints, "That such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The apostle John in the first chapter of his gospel, says, "As many as received Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." And in the third chapter of his first epistle, he insists on the same distinction, as a matter of high importance. "Little children, let no man deceive you (by pretending there is no difference between saints and sinners, for) he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as

he, that is Christ, is righteous: He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: And he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." Thus the essential distinction between the righteous and the wicked appears to be perfectly consonant to the whole tenor of the sacred oracles.

III. Christ further asserts that the righteous and the wicked shall be separated from each other, and respectively rewarded and punished at the last day. "And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand; Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." This representation of the process of the last day falls in with the natural apprehensions of mankind. They naturally expect a future judgment, and they as naturally expect the judgment of God will be according to truth, and proceed upon the immutable principles of perfect rectitude.

And we have sufficient grounds to expect this, from many instances of the divine conduct. God separated the fallen angels from the rest of the heavenly hosts, and doomed them to a state of darkness and despair. He approved and preserved Noah, whilst he condemned and destroyed the ungodly world. He preserved just Lot from the ruins of Sodom. And he distinguished Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, from that evil generation, who were doomed to fall in the wilderness. These instances presage a more general and perfect display of retributive justice at the last day. And in this light they are considered and improved by the inspired writers of the new-testament. The apostle Peter urges them as incontestible proofs of future rewards and punishments. "For, says he, if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an *ensample* unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:—The Lord knoweth how to deliver the *godly* out of temptations, and to reserve the *unjust* unto the day of judgment to be *punished*." And the apos-

tle Paul reasons in the same manner upon the divine conduct towards the devoted Israelites. "But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now all these things happened unto them for *ensamples*; and they are written for *our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the world are come." These instances leave us no room to doubt, that God will finally dispense rewards and punishments to all mankind with perfect rectitude and impartiality.

Nor is this less evident from the whole tenor and spirit of the *gospel*, which sets the rewards of the righteous, and punishments of the wicked after death, in the clearest and strongest light. The gospel not only proclaims divine mercy to all penitent and believing sinners, but on the contrary, denounces inevitable destruction to all who finally reject the offers of life. Accordingly our Lord, when he sent forth his apostles to preach the gospel, gave them special charge to proclaim its solemn sanctions, as well as its gracious proposals. "And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two.—And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them. Verily, I say unto you, It shall

be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, *in the day of judgment*, than for that city." After Christ's resurrection, and just before his ascension into heaven, he gave a commission to his apostles, and to all their successors in the ministry, to preach the gospel wherever divine providence should call them. And their commission runs in this solemn form. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Here is the very genius and spirit of that gospel, which is to be unfolded and inculcated by all the ministers of Christ in every age of the church. And according to this summary of the gospel, future rewards and punishments appear to be not only consistent with the gospel, but an essential part of it. Indeed the gospel gives as full assurance of the destruction of unbelievers, as of the salvation of believers; and as infallibly fixes the certainty of future punishments as of future rewards.

This truth evidently runs through the whole frame and contexture of the gospel, and is interwoven with all its peculiar and leading sentiments. We might instance in the doctrine of election, divine sovereignty, regeneration, &c. But we shall only mention the terms of salvation, which are the cardinal precepts of the gospel.

Repentance is one of these. It is much insisted on both in the old testament and new.

Solomon says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: But whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy." David tells us, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Christ also declares, "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And he expressly told sinners, on a certain occasion, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Faith in the Mediator is a term of the divine acceptance. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved: But he that believeth not shall be damned."

Love to Christ is a condition of divine approbation at the last day. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathama maranatha." That is to say, let him be accursed when the Lord cometh to judgment.

A forgiving spirit is likewise necessary in order to obtain divine forgiveness. "When ye stand praying forgive if ye have ought against any: That your Father also, which is in heaven, may forgive your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father, which is in heaven, forgive your trespasses."

And it is equally necessary to persevere in all christian graces and duties, in order to receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. "Now the just shall live by faith: But if any man draw back, my soul

shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of their souls." These terms of salvation speak for themselves. If they have any meaning, they must mean that those who comply with them shall be saved; but those who reject them shall be lost.

The doctrine of future rewards and punishments may receive additional proof from many express declarations of scripture. To recite every passage in favour of this truth, would be to transcribe a great part of the bible. We shall therefore only mention a few, which are the most plain, and pertinent to our subject. We read in the ninth psalm, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." There was a set of men, in the days of Malachi, who ridiculed all experimental religion and vital piety. They said it was a vain thing to serve God, to walk mournfully before him, or to keep his ordinances. They called the proud happy, and applauded the workers of iniquity. In contrast with such persons, the prophet paints the characters and future prospects of the righteous in the most lively colours. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the

Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my jewels ; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not."

The apostle Paul speaks equally plain and determinate on this head, in the second chapter of Romans. " But we are sure the judgment of God is according to truth, against them that commit such things. And thinkest thou, O man, that judgest those that do such things and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who shall render to every man according to his deeds: To them, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality; eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every *soul* of man (not sin of man, but *soul* of man) that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

To these may be added the declarations of Christ. " Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many

there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me, *ye that work iniquity*." "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: But rather fear him, which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

To enforce these solemn warnings, our compassionate Redeemer, as it were, sets before our eyes the certainty and danger of future punishments, by a number of well-chosen and striking parables. To this end he spoke the parable of the vineyard—of the sower—of the rich fool—of the marriage supper—of the ten virgins—of the talents—of the tares—and of the rich man and Lazarus. Each of these parables would greatly serve to illustrate the subject before us, but especially the two last; which, therefore, we beg leave to recite at large. The parable of the tares is in the thirteenth of Matthew. "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and

sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came, and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou that we go and gather them up? But he said, nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: And in the time of harvest, I will say unto the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles, to burn them: But gather the wheat into my barn." Our Lord's exposition of his own parable supercedes any other comment. It is this. "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one: The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and *them which* do iniquity: And shall cast *them* (not their *sins*, but them personally) into a furnace of fire: There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall

the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father."

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in the sixteenth of Luke, gives us a still more visible and affecting representation of the miseries of the damned. "There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores; and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried: And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue: For I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed: So that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot, neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for

I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets: Let them hear them. And he said, nay, Father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." Nothing short of dreadful experience can give us clearer evidence of future torments than this parable; nor afford a better comment upon our Lord's representation of the final separation between the righteous and the wicked, and their respective rewards and punishments at the last day.

There is one thing more contained in the text, which deserves particular notice, and that is,

IV. The endless duration of future rewards and punishments. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into *everlasting* punishment: But the righteous into life *eternal*." This is the general voice of scripture. The prophet Daniel says, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to *everlasting* life, and some to shame, and *everlasting* contempt." The apostle Paul asserts, that "the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in

flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." In Rev. 20th, 3d, the apostle John tells us, "He saw Satan cast into the *bottomless* pit." This epithet, which we meet with no less than six times besides in this book, expresses in the strongest manner the never-ending miseries of the wicked, the smoke of whose torments is repeatedly said to ascend for ever and ever. Our Lord once before asserted the eternity of future punishments as clearly as he does in the text. "If thy hand offend thee cut it off: It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: It is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." In this last passage the eternity of hell-torments is expressed in terms which admit of no evasion. Our Lord's ar-

gument here turns upon the infinite disparity between temporal and eternal pains. Duration is the only point to be illustrated. And finite is here set in contrast with infinite duration. And this infinite duration is expressed by a variety of epithets, which are, of all others, the most plain, determinate, and unexceptionable.

As to the words—eternal—everlasting—forever and ever—they generally signify a duration which is absolutely boundless, and are to be taken so here, unless there be some special reason for restricting them to a limited duration. When they are applied to subjects which are in their *own nature temporary*; this naturally leads us to understand them in a limited and restricted sense. But when they are applied to the souls of men which are immortal, the subject allows us to interpret them in their most common and extensive meaning. The souls of the wicked may exist as long as the souls of the righteous, and therefore the miseries of the former may run parallel with the happiness of the latter. And this is asserted in the text. The same word in the original is used to express the duration of future punishments, which is used to express the duration of future rewards. “And these shall go away into *everlasting* punishment: But the righteous into life *eternal*.” The Greek word here rendered eternal and everlasting, is rendered so fifty-seven times in the new-testament; and there are but

two places in the new-testament, where the word eternal or everlasting comes from any other Greek word. The same Greek word is likewise used both in the old and new-testament, to signify the eternity of the divine existence.* And the Earl of Nottingham hath shown, that this Greek word signifies eternity in the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, and the best Greek authors, and that they have no better word in their language, by which to express a proper eternity or endless duration.|| Indeed Dr. Hartley, who maintains that the miseries of the damned will finally cease, allows that the scripture expressions concerning the eternity of hell-torments are sufficiently plain and determinate, and would establish the point if any mere expressions could possibly do it, which, however, he absolutely denies. And though Mr. Seigvolk and others say, the Greek words which the inspired writers here made use of to express the eternity of future punishments, only signify *an age, or ages, or ages of ages, or periodical eternities of 50, 100, 1000, 2000 years continuance*, yet they do not tell us what other words could have been used to express an absolute eternity with more certainty and precision, or more to their satisfaction. According to their criticisms, if the

* See Gen. xxii. 23. Isaiah xl. 28, and xxvi. 4, and lvii. 15. Psalm xli. 13, and xc. 2, and xciii. 2, and cvi. 48. Daniel xii. 7. Rom. xvi. 26. 1 Tim. i. 17.

|| See his criticisms on those words in his answer to Mr. Whiston, Ed. 9. p. 36, 37, 38.

inspired writers had really intended to assert the endless duration of future punishments, they could not have done it, because there is no word in any language, which primarily signifies an absolute eternity. But these, and all other critics, however, are obliged to own, that the inspired writers have used such expressions as *sometimes signify eternity*, and acknowledge that the sense of such expressions ought to be determined by the nature of the subjects to which they applied, and the connection in which they are used. Hence there appears no force in the criticisms which have been made upon the words, by which the eternity of future punishments is expressed in the sacred oracles. So far as words, or mere expressions can determine the matter, it is absolute certain, that both the miseries of the wicked, and the happiness of the righteous will run parallel with the interminable ages of eternity.

Nor is there any thing in scripture or reason to take off the force of these expressions, or lead us to imagine the wicked will ever be released from punishment and restored to the divine favour.

I. We have no reason to think so from the nature of sin. All allow that sin and guilt are inseparably connected, and therefore that every sin deserves *some* punishment. But many imagine, that no transient, momentary act of a finite creature can contain such malignity and guilt, as to deserve an *eternal*

punishment; and therefore that the damned must finally be released from punishment, upon the foot of equity, having paid the uttermost farthing which they owed to divine justice. And if their guilt shall ever cease, we may be assured their punishment will also cease, for the Judge of all the earth will do right, and punish them no longer than they deserve. But who, in the whole circle of the intelligent creation, can tell us when their guilt, or desert of punishment will cease? *Sin* and *guilt* are inseparably connected. *Guilt* can no more be separated from sin than *criminality*. There is no sin without criminality, and no criminality without guilt, or desert of punishment. Therefore both the criminality and guilt of a crime must continue as long as the crime continues, or till it ceases to be a crime, and becomes an innocent action. But can murder, for instance, which is a crime in the very nature of things, ever become a virtue? Can time, or obedience, or sufferings, or even a divine declaration, alter its nature, and render it an innocent action? Virtue and vice, sin and holiness, are founded in the nature of things, and so must forever remain immutable. Hence that which was once virtuous, will forever be virtuous; that which was once vicious, will forever be vicious; that which was once praise-worthy, will forever be praise-worthy; that which was once blame-worthy, will forever be blame-worthy; and that which once

deserved punishment, will forever deserve punishment. Now if neither the nature of sin can be changed, nor the guilt of it taken away, then the damned, who have once deserved punishment, will forever deserve it, and consequently God may, in point of justice, punish them to all eternity.

2. There is no ground to expect that the punishments of the damned will ever soften and purify their hearts, and so prepare them, in some distant period, to exchange the regions of darkness for the mansions of bliss. Among others, Dr. Hartley and Chevalier Ramsay build their strongest hopes of the final restitution of all lapsed beings to the divine favour, upon this foundation. They imagine the punishments of the wicked will naturally soften and meliorate their hearts, and finally qualify them for the society and enjoyment of the blessed. They suppose God's ultimate view in punishing the wicked after death is to reclaim them, and bring them to good. They look upon such persons as die in impenitence and unbelief as peculiarly *perverse* and *obdurate*, whom none of the mild methods of providence and grace could effectually subdue and reclaim in this life, and therefore God is reduced to the disagreeable necessity of purging and purifying them, by the harsh and severe means of hell-torments. They imagine God constantly desires and uniformly pursues the happiness of every individual of the human race, and will bring them

all to pure and permanent felicity, as soon as he can possibly do it consistent with *their moral freedom* and *inveterate habits* of sin. And “as God cannot be eternally frustrated in his designs; as finite impotence, folly and malice cannot forever surmount infinite power, wisdom and goodness; as the sacrifice of the Lamb slain cannot be forever void and of no effect; reprobate souls and angels cannot be forever unconvertible, nor God unappeasable, nor moral and physical evil undestructible. Wherefore. infernal punishments must at last cease, and all lapsed beings be at length pardoned and re-established in a permanent state of happiness and glory, never more to fall again. This is the end and consummation of all things, and the designs of all God’s promises and punishments.”

But is there any thing in divine revelation to support this hypothesis? That God visits the righteous, in this life, with pains, trials and afflictions, for their *spiritual benefit*, he hath expressly told us, and they have found to be true by happy experience. “My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the father of our spirits, and live? For they verily, for a few days, chasten-

ed us after their own pleasure ; but he for our *profit*, that we might be partakers of *his holiness*." And David gratefully acknowledges that he derived real benefit from the divine corrections. " Before I was afflicted, I went astray ; but now have I kept thy word. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and thou in faithfulness hath corrected me" Thus God lets his children know the salutary nature of his fatherly chastisements. But where do we find the least intimation in scripture, that God intends to punish the wicked in a future state, for their *benefit*, as he here corrects his children for their spiritual good: Hath he not, on the contrary, expressly assured the wicked, that he intends to punish them, after death, not to *save*, but *destroy* them, not to express his love towards them, but his indignation and wrath? This is the plain import of the sentence to be denounced against them at the last day. " Depart from me ye *curst*, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," " Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord." " If I wet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgment ; I will render *vengeance* to mine *enemies*, and will reward them that *hate* me." " What if God, *willing to shew his wrath*, and make his power known, endured with much long suffering the *vessels of wrath fitted to destruction*." Here the wicked after death are represented as the *enemies* of God, and as the

objects of his wrath, and he is represented as punishing them to *reward* them for their wickedness, and to express his wrath and displeasure towards them, without the least regard to their amendment and benefit. But if future punishments were intended as fatherly chastisements to purify the wicked, and qualify them for the eternal joys of heaven, why are they then represented as expressive of divine wrath, indignation and vengeance, instead of the tender mercy of God towards his offending but beloved offspring? The truth is, these expressions put it beyond doubt, that God has diametrically opposite ends in chastising the righteous in this life, and punishing the wicked in the next. And we may be assured God can and will make his own *means* answer his own *ends*. As he designs future punishments shall not *soften*, but *harden*, shall not *save* but *destroy* the wicked; so they will eventually have this, and no other effect upon them. Accordingly, we find this confirmed by the most incontestible evidence. A punishment of near six thousand years continuance hath hitherto, in no measure, subdued or softened the heart of Satan, who still remains an avowed and malignant enemy to God and man. The signal plagues sent in rapid succession on Pharaoh, instead of softening, *hardened* his stubborn heart, and made him seven-fold more a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction, according to the divine *purpose* and *prediction* concerning him. And the

tremendous judgments which fell on the subjects of Satan's kingdom, at the pouring out of the sixth vial, had the same *hardening* effect and impression on their impenitent hearts. "The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast: And his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and *repented not of their deeds.*" Hence we are to conclude that the vials of divine wrath, to be poured on the enemies of Christ at the last day, instead of softening and meliorating their hearts, will only serve to confirm and increase their malignant dispositions, to render them more odious to God, and more unmeet for the society and enjoyments of the blessed: And being thus eternally unqualified for heaven, they will never find admission into those realms of love and unpolluted bliss. Besides,

3. There is no intimation in the word of God, that those who are once separated from the righteous at the last day, shall ever be united to them again. Our text, and many other passages of scripture, clearly ascertain the time, manner, and reason of the separation between the righteous and the wicked, but there is not a text to be found, which intimates when, how, or for what reason they shall be re-united. Every representation of the general judgment naturally leads us to suppose, that God will then finally settle all the

affairs of mankind, and irreversably fix their characters and conditions for eternity. Accordingly none of the most able writers, that we have met with, in favour of the final happiness of allapsed beings, have presumed to tell us *when* this important event shall take place, or the miseries of the damned shall cease. But if God intended to release them, one would imagine, that he would have made it known in his word, and relieved them from that intolerable despair, to which they may now be liable for ages of ages. Why should he so particularly fix, and reveal, and describe the day when their punishments shall commence, but never give the least hint concerning the time and circumstances of their release? Is not this bare silence a strong presumption that they shall never be released, and a full demonstration that no man can *prove* that they ever will?

N. B. *This Discourse may be divided here.*

NOW if the above observations have fully established the eternity of future punishments, then we are obliged to believe the doctrine, whether we can answer all the objections made against it, or not. It would be very absurd for a man to deny his own existence, the existence of his fellow creatures, and the earth's annual productions of herbs, fruits and flowers, because, after all his phi-

losophical researches, he is unable to investigate the *mode* of the divine operation in creation and providence. And it is equally absurd to disbelieve the being of God, the inspiration of the scriptures, or the *eternity* of future punishments, because there may be some things connected with these subjects, which lie beyond the sphere of human comprehension. It is not the intention of these observations, however, to preclude an examination of any objections that may be urged against the eternity of hell-torments, or any other doctrine of the gospel; or to insinuate that we are bound to believe real contradictions and absurdities; but only to prepare the mind to look at the difficulties which we propose to consider, with candour and impartiality; and lead us to rest our faith upon the firm foundation of real evidence.

It is said, that “ by the separation between
 “ the sheep and the goats in the text, is not
 “ to be understood a separation between
 “ saints and sinners, but only a separation be-
 “ tween *sin* and the *sinner*. The *sins* of men
 “ shall be separated from their *persons*, and
 “ their persons shall be saved, whilst their
 “ sins, and the father of them, the devil,
 “ shall be destroyed.* This our Lord teach-
 “ eth in the parable of the tares, and the a-
 “ postle Paul acknowledgeth to be true,
 “ when he says, speaking of his own *evil*

* See a late catechism, which, *perhaps injuriously*, claims the merit of a *femal* production.

“conduct, *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*”

In answer to this, it is easy to observe, that though a sinner may become a saint, and a saint may become perfectly holy, or free from all in-dwelling sin and corruption; yet the relation between him and his past sins cannot be dissolved. It will, for instance, forever remain true, that the apostle Paul persecuted the church of Christ, and that sin will always be his. He hath never sinned since he arrived to heaven, and never will sin again, yet the connection between him and his past sins will forever remain and be *felt*, so as to enhance his own happiness, and display the riches of divine grace towards him. The notion therefore that sin can be perfectly disconnected from the sinner, that it can be burnt up, destroyed, or annihilated, is a gross absurdity.

Besides our Lord tells us in plain terms, that by sheep and goats, he means *all nations*. And he uses these metaphors in the same sense in which other inspired writers use them. Sheep signify *good* men, and goats *bad*, in many other places of scripture.* But if any one would *feel* the absurdity of supposing that goats represent *sins*, let him only read the text according to this construction. “Then shall he say also unto *them* on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed

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sins, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an-hungered and ye *sins* gave me no meat: I was a thirsty, and ye *sins* gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye *sins* took me not in: Naked, and ye *sins* clothed me not: Sick, and in prison, and ye *sins* visited me not. Then shall those *sins* answer him, *saying*, &c."

It is objected farther, that " Christ as mediator was so united to mankind, that his actions were theirs, his obedience theirs, and his sufferings theirs, and consequently he hath as fully restored the whole human race to the divine favour, as if they had all obeyed and suffered in their own persons. The divine law now hath no demands upon them, nor condemning power over them. Their salvation solely depends upon their union to Christ, which God constituted and established before the world began. And by virtue of that union, they will all be admitted to heaven, at the last day, and not one of Christ's members, not one of Adam's race will be finally lost." Mr. Relly says,* " Christ having taken on him the seed of Abraham, *he in them*, *and they in him*, fulfilled all righteousness, obeyed the law, and underwent the penalty for the past transgression, being thus made perfect *in one*." " According to this union, or being in him, as branches in the vine, as members in the body, &c. the people

* Treatise on union. Boston Ed. p. 22.

“ are considered together with him, through
 “ all the circumstances of his birth, life,
 “ death, resurrection and glory.”* “ And
 “ thus considering the whole law fulfilled in
 “ Jesus, its *precepts* obeyed, its *penalties*
 “ endured, *he* now inherits the promise:
 “ And apprehending ourselves in *him*, united
 “ to *him*, through all his *doings*, and *suffer-*
 “ *ings*, *his* condition, and state is *ours*.”
 “ And thus standing in *him*, we can indeed
 “ read the law, or the doctrine of rewards,
 “ and punishments, without fear: Because
 “ the punishment, yea all the threatnings in
 “ the book of God, have been executed up-
 “ on *us* (as sinners and law-breakers) in
 “ *him*.”||

This is the corner stone, this is the sole foundation which supports the scheme of *universal* salvation as maintained by Mr. Rely, Mr. Murray, and their followers. If this should give way, their whole fabric falls to the ground, and their hopes perish. We shall therefore consider this point with particular attention.

To suppose that mankind were “ with Christ through all the circumstances of his birth, life, death, resurrection and glory,” is repugnant to the plainest dictates of common sense. Christ was born of the virgin Mary; was circumcised the eighth day; was, at thirty years old, baptized of John in Jordan; was, after this, led into the wilderness,

* P. 26.

|| Page 40.

where he fasted forty days and forty nights. and baffled all the devices of Satan; and being thus prepared, he went forth preaching the gospel, healing the sick, casting out devils, and raising the dead; till finally, he was betrayed by Judas, condemned by Pilate, crucified between two malefactors, buried by Joseph of Arimathea, and after lying three days and three nights in the grave, he arose from the dead, ascended up into heaven, and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Were any, much less the whole human race, with Christ in all these circumstances of his birth, life, death, resurrection and glory? Where is the man who is conscious of being acting, and suffering with Christ in any of these extraordinary and stupendous scenes? But had there been such an union between Christ and mankind, that his obedience was theirs, his sufferings theirs, and his glory theirs, they must all, in every age of the world, be conscious of having the same motives, the same affections, the same sorrows, and the same joys that he had; and of doing the same miraculous actions that he did. But what concord had Christ with Belial? What union of heart with an ungodly world? Was he not pure, and harmless, and *separate* from sinners, through the whole course of his life and conduct upon earth?

It may, perhaps, be said, that this is an unfair representation of the matter, and that by "Christ's being in mankind, and they being

in him," is only intended, that according to a certain divine constitution, God considers what Christ did and suffered as being done and suffered by mankind personally. The answer to this is obvious. No divine constitution or appointment whatever, could make Christ's personal obedience and sufferings ours. A divine constitution cannot alter the nature of things, nor effect impossibilities. Can we conceive that it is now in the power of the Supreme Being, by a new, positive constitution, to make Christ the betrayer of Judas, the crucifier of his crucifiers, and the perpetrator of all the sin and wickedness of the whole human race? But it is no more impossible for God to do this now, than it was from eternity, to make a constitution, by which, not only the actions of Christ and of Judas, but the actions of Christ and of all mankind should be the same. The supposition of a divine constitution relieves no difficulty here. The notion that all mankind were "with Christ through all the circumstances of his birth, life, death, resurrection and glory," is as absurd as the doctrine of transubstantiation, of which no man can form an idea.

And besides all this, it is entirely unscriptural. It is not to be found among any of the unions which are mentioned in the Bible. We there find indeed the union between the human and divine natures in the person of the Mediator. Christ often asserted both his

humanity and divinity. He proclaimed himself not only the Son of Man, but the Son of God; and professed to be not only David's Son, but David's Lord. Accordingly, the Jews, who understood the true import of such phrases, considered him as assuming divinity and equality with God the Father; for which they accused him of the crime of blasphemy. And our Lord, to vindicate himself, never denied, but maintained his claim to the last; which claim was founded upon the union between his human and divine nature. Hence the apostle John tells us, "The word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." And we read, "Great is the mystery of godliness; God manifest in the flesh." Such an union of the two natures in the person of Christ, was necessary to qualify him for the work of redemption. For the divine nature, separately considered, could neither suffer, nor obey; and the human nature, separate from the divine, could not atone by obedience and death; but both these natures being united in the person of Christ completely qualified him for the mediatorial work. Besides, this union was also requisite in order to point out the objects for whom he made atonement. He would appear to die for those, in whose nature he died. Had he took upon him the nature of angels, and died in their nature, this would have proclaimed him the Mediator between God and *them*. But inasmuch as he did not take upon him the nature of an-

gels, but that of the seed of Abraham, this proclaimed him the Mediator between God and *man*. Now if Mr. Relly had only asserted the necessity of such an union as this, in order to render the sufferings of Christ in the room of mankind, consistent with the divine attributes, we should have had no disposition to dissent from him. For we grant it would have been inconsistent with the divine truth, justice, mercy, wisdom and love, to have subjected Christ to those sufferings which he endured in the room of sinners, had he not been united to human nature, and so become the Mediator between God and men. But Mr. Relly, overlooking this union between Christ and *innocent* human nature, maintains that Christ was *united to sinful man, and partook of their guilt*, and on that account *deserved* to suffer, in point of *justice*.* In this view indeed, the sufferings of Christ appear perfectly just, but not in the least degree *meritorious*, for there can be no *merit* in suffering a *just punishment*. So that had it been possible for such an union to have existed as Mr. Relly pleads for, it would have defeated the ends of Christ's death, and prevented an atonement for sin.

The scripture likewise mentions an union between Christ and the *elect*. A certain number of mankind were chosen to salvation from eternity, and given to Christ, in the covenant of redemption, as the reward of his

* Page 3, 4, 5, 6.

sufferings. These are called the *elect*, or the *church*, and often alluded to in scripture, particularly in the following passages. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places *in Christ*; according as he hath chosen us *in him*, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” “Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us *in Christ*, before the world began.” “Ye also, as living stones, are built up a *spiritual house*, an *holy priesthood*, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, behold I lay in Zion a *chief corner stone, elect, precious*; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore, who believe, he is precious: But unto them who are disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the *head of the corner*; and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word, being disobedient, *whereunto also they were appointed*. But ye are a *chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*.” These, and many other passages of scripture, speak of the *elect*,

and speak of them as *peculiar*, and *distinct* from the rest of mankind. All the world are not the elect, but the elect are those who from eternity were chosen out of the world, and who are represented in scripture, as entirely distinct from the world. Our Lord hath taken care to fix and determine this matter with great precision. He says in the 24th of Matthew, "And many false prophets shall arise, and shall *deceive many*, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very *elect*." Here the elect are distinct from the *many* that were to be deceived. Again, in the 15th of John, Christ tells his followers, "If the *world* hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: But because ye are not of the world, but I have *chosen* you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." In the 17th chapter, he hath these expressions. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me *out of the world*. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, *because they are not of the world*, even as I am not of the world."

Now as the elect were chosen to salvation from eternity, *in Christ*, as the means, and *for Christ*, as the reward of his sufferings and death; so it may be truly said, that there hath been a certain *union or connection* between Christ and the elect *from eternity*.

But besides this, there is another more intimate and *vital* union between Christ and the elect, which commences *in time*; but shall endure forever. For whom God predestinates, them he also calls; and whom he calls, them he also justifies; and whom he justifies, them he also glorifies. Hence, says the apostle, speaking of the success of his labours among the Gentiles, “*As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.*” All the elect are brought, in this life, by the influences of the divine Spirit, to repentance and *faith*. And *in faith*, this vital union to Christ commences. The believer then becomes united to Christ *in his affections, views, and interests*. He loves what Christ loves, and hates what Christ hates. He has the same views of the divine Majesty, of the divine law, of sin, and of himself, that Christ has. And he has a joint interest with Christ in the love of God, in the protections of providence, and in all the blessings which result from the work of redemption. This union is of the same nature with that which subsists between Christ and his Father. Accordingly he prays, in the 17th of John, that this union might commence, in time, between him and those whom his Father had given him from eternity. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall *believe* on me thro’ their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may also *be one in us.*” This union

makes the principal figure in the sacred writings, and is oftener alluded to there than any other. It is on account of this union, that saints or believers, in distinction from the world, are said to *die* with Christ; to be *crucified* with Christ; to be *buried* with Christ; to be *quickened* with Christ; to *rise* with Christ; to *live* with Christ; to be *circumcised* with Christ; to be *baptised* with Christ; to be *complete* in Christ; to be *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*. And it is on account of this union, that Christ and the church are so often prefigured and represented by the various metaphors of Adam and Eve; of Adam and his posterity; of the husband and wife; of Aaron and his robes; of the vine and its branches; of the head and its members; and of the corner stone and superstructure.

These unions, which we have now mentioned and described, are the only ones respecting Christ and men, that are to be found in the sacred oracles. And these are so far from bearing the least affinity to that union between Christ and *all* mankind, which Mr. Relly pleads for, that they are utterly inconsistent with it, and subversive of it. If these be true, that must be false. And if these be true, then to one or other of them, must every passage of scripture, which speaks of men's union to Christ, necessarily refer; and of course, leave Mr. Relly's notion of union as destitute of all support from divine revelation, as from reason and common sense.

But it may be still urged in favour of the universal salvation of mankind, that “ Christ
 “ tasted death for every man, and made full
 “ atonement for the sins of the whole world.
 “ And it is preposterous to imagine that any
 “ of those who have been redeemed by the
 “ precious blood of the son of God, should
 “ be finally lost.” I answer,

First, this objection supposes that God is obliged, *in justice*, to save all mankind. Therefore,

Secondly, it supposes that mankind stand in no need of *divine forgiveness*. For if the price of redemption which Christ hath paid, hath fully discharged the debt which sinners owed to God, then they now owe him nothing, and if they owe him nothing, they have nothing to be forgiven; and therefore can never with propriety use that petition in the Lord’s prayer. “ Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” Wherefore,

Thirdly, there can be no grace displayed in the salvation of sinners, by the gospel. For if they all *deserve* to be saved, it is an act of *justice*, but not of *grace*, for God to save them. Though the apostle indeed tells believers that they are “ justified *freely* by his *grace*, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.” But,

Fourthly, this objection is entirely founded in a misapprehension of the nature of Christ’s atonement. It was not the intention of Christ, by his obedience and death, to make *void* the

law, to alter the *nature* of sin, to *move* God, *in mercy*, or *oblige* him, *in justice*, to save sinners ; for all this was impossible. But his design was, to *establish* the law, to *condemn* sin in the flesh, and maintain the dignity of the divine character and government, and thereby open a door for the display of divine mercy and forgiveness towards a perishing world. The death of Christ indeed hath removed all the obstacles, which before stood in the way of the exercise of divine mercy ; and that is all. God is no more obliged, *in point of justice*, to save sinners, than if Christ had never died, and made atonement for sin. If God saves any of the human race now, it is an act of *mere grace*, and not of *justice*. Hence the *extent* of Christ's atonement does not in the least determine, whether more or less, whether a part or the whole of mankind will finally be saved. This can be determined only by the *divine declarations*, and *gracious promises* to Christ, which, as we have shown, all concur to reprobate the notion of universal salvation.

It is said by some, that " God being from
 " eternity perfectly and independently blef-
 " sed, could have no other motive in giving
 " being to his creatures than *their good*, and
 " of consequence, he must infallibly bring
 " them all, sooner or later, to a state of per-
 " fect happiness."

Though this objection is not void of plausibility, yet it seems to carry something in it

extremely absurd and dishonorable to the divine Majesty. For the Supreme Being to leave himself entirely out of view in all his works, and to make every thing in the universe solely subservient to the good of the creature, looks like setting the creature above the infinitely great Jehovah! Besides, if the Deity aims solely at the good of the creature, why should not the creature aim solely at his own good, and make his own happiness the sole object of all his desires and pursuits? And why should God blame him, if, in the pursuit of this object, he casts off fear, restrains prayer, and loves and serves the creature more than the Creator? Moreover, if the Divine Being aims solely at the good of every individual person, why hath he not made every man perfectly happy through every stage and period of his existence? Why hath he made this world an Aceldema, a field of blood, and scene of every evil, where men are born to trouble as the sparks fly upward? Why hath he not rather poured one continued, uninterrupted stream of happiness upon *us*, as he hath upon the angels above, who have never felt one *sinful* passion, nor one *painful* sensation since their existence? Perhaps it will here be said, that though God aims solely at the good of the intelligent creation *in general*, yet this does not necessarily imply that he must *constantly* seek and promote the good of *every individual*. We grant it, and abide the consequence, which

is this. If the good of the intelligent creation *in general*, may *sometimes* require God to give up the good of *individuals*, then it may, for aught we know, require him to give up the good of *individuals forever*. If the *general good* of mankind once required the *temporal* destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts, who knows but *the general good* of the whole intelligent creation, may also require their *eternal destruction*? Therefore allowing that God does, in this sense, aim supremely and solely at the *general good* of the intelligent creation, yet he may nevertheless make myriads and myriads of *individuals* finally and eternally miserable.

There is, however, no reason to think that God had, from eternity, no other view in all his works of creation and providence, than the *general good* of the *created system*. This supposition seems to originate from a false conception of the *nature* and *blessedness* of the Divine Being. God is not an infinite *Intelligence*, who is perfectly destitute of all *propensions*. He is not, as the Epicurians dream, an infinite *Stoic*, who is entirely unaffected with, and indifferent to, all created and uncreated objects. But he is a Being of infinitely clear views, of infinitely wise designs, and of infinitely *strong propensities and affections*. And the perfect, undisturbed, eternal *gratification* of all these, is absolutely essential to his infinite, immutable blessedness. Though God was indeed perfectly

blessed from eternity, independently of his creatures, yet not independently of his own views, purposes and affections. Could we only suppose it possible, that God's purposes and designs should now be erased from his mind, or that he should now find himself unable to carry them into execution, this would prove an eternal diminution of the divine blessedness. But since known unto God are all his works from the beginning; since they have always stood present to his view, as fully accomplished, they have been an eternal source of ineffable satisfaction, self-complacency and delight. Now if God be capable of great and noble designs, if he be capable of great and noble exertions, and capable of taking a *true, real, infinite pleasure and delight* in all his works, then it is easy to conceive that he might make his own *pleasure, his own blessedness or glory*, the grand and supreme object in all his works of creation and providence, and have but an inferior and subordinate respect to the good of the creature. Accordingly the scripture represents this as his ultimate and supreme end in the creation of the world. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov. xvi. 4. The apostle says, that "of him, and through him, and to him are all things." Rom. xi. 39. And it is the general voice of heaven, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast

-created all things, and for *thy PLEASURE*, they are and were created." Besides, the whole course of providence, from the beginning to this day, clearly demonstrates that God hath sought his own glory supremely, and the good of the creature but subordinately, in all his conduct. He expelled the rebel angels from heaven, destroyed the old world, and burnt up Sodom and Gomorrah, not for *their good*, but for his *own glory*. And we know the perdition of Pharaoh and of Judas was not designed for *their good*, since Christ hath said of the one, that it had been good for him, if he had never been born, and God hath told us, he raised up the other, that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. Hence the supreme and ultimate ends of the Deity in the creation of the world, afford no evidence in favour of the *universal* salvation of the human race. It may be consistent with God's original and eternal designs, for aught we know, to continue the miseries of the damned to all eternity.

We often hear the infinite love and mercy of the Deity pathetically urged, as an irrefragable argument against the eternity of future punishments. It is said, "this doctrine represents the divine benevolence as far below the pity and compassion that are found in the human heart. A parent's love cannot endure the thought that the dear offspring of his own bowels should be

“ made fuel for quenchless flames. And the
 “ most malevolent man on earth does not e-
 “ ven *wish* that his worst enemy should lie
 “ down in eternal sorrow, and dwell with e-
 “ verlasting burnings. Much less can the
 “ kind parent of the universe, who is good
 “ unto all, and whose tender mercies are o-
 “ ver all his works, find it in his heart to
 “ doom any of the human race to the pains
 “ of hell *forever*.”

This objection appears to be rather an ad-
 dress to the soft and tender passions of human
 nature, than an appeal to the cool and impar-
 tial dictates of right reason. The weaker pas-
 sions of our animal nature recoil in the view
 of those acts of public justice, which our
 reason, our conscience, and our *real* bene-
 volence *approve*, and which the *divine* au-
 thority hath absolutely required. But who
 would hence conclude that *our* love and
 compassion transcend the tender mercies of
 the Deity? Did not Noah preach an hundred
 and twenty years to a stupid and impenitent
 world? Did he not offer up strong prayers
 and cries to the Father of Mercies, that he
 would graciously avert the dire destruction
 which hung over their guilty heads? And did
 he not rise in fervor and importunity, as the
 period of their day of grace and space of re-
 pentance drew nigh? How then must he have
 felt, when he stood a spectator of their final
 doom! Who can describe or conceive the
 tender emotions of his heart, the painful con-

flits and tumults of his breast, when the tremendous scene opened to his view! When he beheld the rains falling, the fountains of the great deep breaking up, and all nature in convulsions; and heard the waves roaring, and a guilty world, day after day, crying, and praying, and rending the heavens with their last, expiring groans! But shall we imagine that God was equally *shocked* on this solemn occasion! No! He, (if we may be allowed the comparison) stood, like Brutus, with stern justice on his countenance, and beheld his beloved, but guilty offspring, receive the due reward of their deeds.

With what fervent importunity did Abraham beseech the Most High to spare the devoted cities of Sodom and Gomorrah? And next morning, when he repaired to the place where he had stood and prayed before the Lord, and looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and towards all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace; how did it awaken every tender feeling of humanity and benevolence? But who will hence conclude that the Father of Mercies had less love and compassion towards the workmanship of his own hands, than Abraham? Hence nothing but our danger can equal our delusion, if we imagine the Divine Being to be altogether such an one as ourselves, and judge of the divine clemency by our own. What if Noah, what if Lot had

done so! What if Noah had said, "I know the world is become universally corrupt. I know the earth is filled with violence. I know God hath told me his patience is limited to one hundred and twenty years. But I know my own heart recoils at the thoughts of their destruction, and it is my sincere desire and prayer to God that they might be saved. And I also know God is infinitely more kind, and gracious, and merciful than I am. I will therefore neglect the ark, and build my house on the sand, and fear no evil." But behold! the floods come, the winds blow, and the storms beat on his house, and it falls, and great is the fall of it! What if Lot had considered the divine threatenings as a mere mockery, like his sons-in-law, would he not have perished with them in the ruins of Sodom? And is it not equally dangerous to reason in the same manner now, against the threatenings of the wrath to come?

But still, says the objector, is not God a God of love? and is it the nature of love to punish, especially its beloved objects? I answer, yes; it is the genuine tendency of *true* love, under certain circumstances, to punish. True love to his child, induces the kind and indulgent parent to use the rod of correction for his good. So says Solomon, "He that spareth his rod, hateth his son, but he that *loveth* him, chasteneth him betimes." So whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. "But this reaches not the case," replies the ob-

jector. "I can easily conceive that love
 "should punish its beloved object for its
 "good; but will it extend further? Will it
 "punish more than the benefit of the object
 "punished requires? Will it therefore pun-
 "ish forever?" No doubt it will, when the
good of the object punished is not the end pro-
 posed by the punishment. It is not always the
 intention of punishment to consult the *good*
 of the object punished. This is never the
 case with respect to *capital* punishments in
 this life. It is *love* to his country, or a ten-
 der regard to the *public* good, that induces
 the civil magistrate to condemn the traitor
 or murderer to a painful and ignominious
 death. It was love to God that fired the
 breast of Phineas, when he rushed into the
 camp of Israel, and slew Zimri and Kozbi.
 And thus it was considered, approved and re-
 warded by the God of love. "And the Lord
 spake unto Moses, saying, Phineas the son of
 Eleazer, the son of Aaron the priest, hath
 turned my wrath away from the children of
 Israel (*while he was zealous for my sake a-*
mong them) that I consumed not the chil-
 dren of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore
 say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of
 peace, &c." It is love to the objects injured
 and not to the objects punished, that dictates
 the nature, degree and duration of their pun-
 ishment. Thus it is God's love to himself,
 to his son, to his law, and to the general
 good of the universe that induces him to

punish the wicked after death. And as his infinite love to these objects will eternally remain, so it will induce him to punish the wicked *forever*. His love will burn to the lowest hell. Hence we find the most exemplary acts of divine justice are represented in scripture as the expressions of divine *mercy*. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is *good*; for his *mercy* endureth forever. To him that by wisdom made the heavens; for his mercy endureth forever. To him that *smote* Egypt in their first born; for his mercy endureth forever. And brought out Israel from among them; for his mercy endureth forever. But *overthrew* Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea; for his mercy endureth forever. To him that *smote* great kings; for his mercy endureth forever. And *slew* famous kings; for his mercy endureth forever. *Sihon king of the Amorites*; for his mercy endureth forever. And *Og king of Bashan*; for his mercy endureth forever." Here the displays of divine justice are considered as the displays of the same *goodness* which first gave birth to the creation of the world. But to whom is the display of this justice, a *mercy*? To the wicked? Nay, but to the Israel, to the church of God. Hence the degree and duration of the punishments of the wicked will always hold proportion to the degree and duration of the *divine love* to the righteous. Accordingly God represents his *punitive justice* as the necessary fruit and effect of

his infinite goodness and mercy. When Moses requested a special manifestation of his glory. He told him he would cause all his *goodness* to pass before him. And to do this, he proclaimed himself "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth—and that will by no means *clear guilty*." Thus it appears that divine *goodness* may, and infallibly will *punish* the wicked *forever*, if the *good* of the universe requires their *eternal* punishment.

"The punishments of the damned," say some, "must disturb the joys of the blessed. For how can those pure and benevolent spirits behold, *without pain*, multitudes of their fellow-creatures, whom they love as themselves, eternally weltering under the vials of divine wrath."

In answer to this it may be observed,

First, that the punishments of the damned are the displays of *divine justice* towards them.

Secondly, that they are the displays of *divine goodness* towards the *blest*. Hence,

Thirdly, as displays of *divine goodness*, the heavenly hosts ought not only to *approve* of them, but to *rejoice* in them, and *praise* God for them. And hence,

Fourthly, the scripture tells us, that the pure spirits above do rejoice in and praise God for the eternal punishments which he inflicts upon his and their enemies. Upon the

fall of mystical Babylon, it is said, " Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets ; for God hath avenged you on her." " And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia : Salvation, and glory, and power unto the Lord our God : For true and *righteous* are *his judgments* ; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rises up *forever and ever*."

It is said, " If God should save some of mankind and finally punish others, then he *would be a respecter of persons*."

To this it is sufficient to reply, that divine inspiration assures us, that God's rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked is *the very thing*, which demonstrates him to be no respecter of persons. " But if ye call on the Father, who, *without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work*, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." 1 Pet. i. 17. " And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men ; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance ; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that *doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done*: And there is *no respect of persons*." Coloss. iii. 23, 24, 25. And the apostle tells the finally impenitent sinner, that God will render to every man ac-

according to his deeds: To them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation, and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. *For there is no respect of persons with God.*" Rom. ii. 6, 8, 9, 11.

It is further urged against the eternal punishments of the wicked, that "though God is obliged to fulfil his *promises*, yet he is not obliged to fulfil his *threatnings*; and therefore notwithstanding he hath threatened eternal destruction to the finally impenitent, yet we cannot hence absolutely determine that he will make them eternally miserable."

This objection does in a great measure, if not intirely defeat itself. For it supposes,

First, that God has really threatened eternal destruction to the wicked.

Secondly, it supposes that God may consistently with justice make them eternally miserable.

Thirdly, it supposes that it is utterly impossible for us to know and *prove*, that he will *not punish* them *eternally*, because this cannot be known unless God has *promised* not to fulfil his threatenings, which is absurd.

Fourthly, it supposes that it is *probable* he will punish the wicked *forever*. Divine

threatenings must, at least, imply that it is in some measure *probable*, that God will fulfil them, or else they imply nothing, have no meaning, and answer no end. And this probability is greatly corroborated by the many instances, which the scripture gives us, of God's fulfilling his threatenings. He threatened to destroy the old world, in the space of an hundred and twenty years. And accordingly at the time appointed he destroyed them. He threatened to judge and destroy the Egyptians, after a period of four hundred years. And when the time of promise and threatenings came, he overthrew the Egyptians, and set the seed of Abraham free from the house of bondage. He threatened destruction to the Canaanites, and he destroyed them accordingly. He threatened a seventy years captivity to his people Israel, and he fulfilled his threatenings. He threatened the total excision of the Jews, their city and temple, and they were cut off at the time of predicted. He threatened the ruin of the seven churches of Asia; and his threatenings have long since been fulfilled. He threatened the utter extinction of Babylon and Nineveh, and his threatenings have had a most exact and punctual accomplishment.* These and many other instances which might be adduced, afford a strong probability and presumption that God will fulfil all his threatenings ac-

* See Newton on the prophecies.

according to their *real nature* and *import*. Nor does the case of Nineveh rightly understood suppose the contrary. Gods threatenings against Nineveh were evidently *conditional*, agreeably that divine maxim in the 18th of Jeremiah. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation—If that nation, against whom I have pronounced *turn* from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." And Jonah and the king of Nineveh evidently understood the threatening with this *implied* condition; or why did Jonah preach, or the Ninevites fast? Besides,

Fifthly, this objection supposes that it is as certain, *as it can be*, that God will punish the wicked *eternally*. Nothing can make this more certain than the *divine threatenings*. If God's threatenings do not fix the certainty of future and eternal punishments beyond doubt, then if God really intends to punish the wicked to all eternity, he cannot make them certain of it in this life, for he can give them no higher evidence of it than his express declarations and threatenings. So that if they will not believe this evidence, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. Accordingly God assures us, that *his threatenings* are as much to be relied on as *his promises*, and that his *truth* and *divinity* are *pledged* in both. Thus his promises and threatenings are set upon a level in the 18th of Jeremiah. "At what

instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down, and to destroy it ; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it ; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the *good* wherewith I said I would benefit it." Here God exhibits the same evidence of the truth and certainty of his threatenings as of his promises. And in other places he sets them both on the same immutable footing. " If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." Here is a promise. " But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword." Here is a threatening. And then both are confirmed, by the following emphatical asseveration, "*for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.*" And this mode of asseveration is often used with respect to the divine threatenings as well as promises. The threatenings against Tyre run in this solemn form : " Therefore, thus said the LORD GOD, Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and I will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers : I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock ; it

shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea : *For I have spoken it saith the Lord.*" Ezek. xvii. 3, 4, 5. This threatening proved true, and was fully accomplished many ages ago.* There is another threatening against God's own people of the same tenor. " Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee. *I the Lord have spoken it ; it shall come to pass ; and I will do it.*" Ezek. xiv. 13, 14. Thus it appears that God's *threatenings* have the same ground of certainty as his *promises*. They are both founded on the infallible veracity, and absolute immutability of Him *who cannot lie*.

Another objection is this. " If sin and
 " misery be not totally abolished, and all
 " mankind finally saved, then Satan will
 " triumph, and Christ will fail of accom-
 " plishing one of his principal ends in the
 " work of redemption, which is to bruise
 " the serpent's head, and destroy the works
 " of the devil."

To this it may be replied, in the first place, that *merely the abolishing of sin and misery* will not destroy the works of the devil, and bruise the serpent's head. For supposing in any period of eternity, sin and misery should be perfectly abolished, Satan

* See Newton on the prophecies.

would still have cause to triumph, that he had brought an indelible stain upon the divine character, and done an irreparable injury to his creatures, and so far frustrated the kind and benevolent purposes of the Deity in the work of creation. Unless,

Secondly, all the sin and misery which he had proved the means of introducing into God's world, are *turned against him*, and made instrumental of bringing *more glory* to God, and *more happiness* to the universe than if they had never existed. When this is done, Satan is effectually conquered, his *head* is bruised, and his works destroyed. But,

Thirdly, if the sin and misery of ages, can be made the means of bringing *more glory* to God, and *more happiness* to the universe, than if they had never existed; then the sin and misery of the damned through all eternity, may prove the means of promoting the same ends forever. Therefore, in order effectually to destroy the works of the devil, and bruise the serpent's head, it may be absolutely necessary that Satan and multitudes of his followers should be eternally miserable. Accordingly the scripture represents Christ as triumphing over Satan, by turning all his schemes and works against him, and finally casting him and his adherents into the bottomless pit, under the wrath of God, and the everlasting contempt of the heavenly world. And thus Christ is exalted, and his enemies are made his footstool,

Having shown that there will be a general judgment—that there is an essential distinction between the righteous and the wicked—that agreeably to this distinction, they will be separated at the last day, and rewarded and punished according to their works—that their respective rewards and punishments will endure *forever*—and that there are no *solid* objections against these solemn and interesting truths ; it only remains to conclude this discourse with such reflections as are naturally suggested by the subject.

It is obvious to remark, in the first place, that every scheme of *universal* salvation is utterly destitute of any foundation in the word of God. The foregoing observations equally strike at the root of this opinion, in whatever shape it appears, or on whatever ground it is built. Various schemes have been pursued to establish the notion of the final restoration and happiness of all lapsed beings. This notion perhaps was first conceived in the fertile brain of Origin, who, like other great and aspiring minds, made such gross blunders in speculation, as men of inferior size are in capable of committing. This opinion of his transpired with several others equally absurd and romantic. He maintained—that the souls of men do pre-exist—that through their fault and negligence they appear here inhabitants of the earth cloathed in terrestrial bodies—that the mystery of the resurrection is this, that we shall be

clothed with heavenly or ætherial bodies—that after long periods of time the damned shall be delivered from their torments, and try their fortunes again in such regions of the world as their natures fit them for—and that the earth, after her conflagration, shall become habitable again, and be the mansions of men and other animals ; and this in eternal vicissitudes.”* Such crude and undigested notions were propagated by Origin, which probably would have dropt into oblivion ages ago, had not the *name* of their author carried more weight with some, than the strength of his arguments. Out of this rubbish, however, the Romish clergy formed the absurd doctrine of Purgatory. And after them, Chevalier Ramsay, Dr. Hartley and others, have built, on the same foundation, the doctrine of the final restoration of all lapsed beings to the divine favour.

Others have founded their expectations of the final happiness of the whole intelligent creation on the infinite goodness and mercy of the Supreme Being. They suppose that the *endless* misery of the creature cannot be reconciled with the nature of his crime, nor the boundless love and benevolence of the Deity. This scheme hath been generally adopted by deistical writers.

And, of late, Mr. Rely hath devised another method of arriving to the same conclusion.

on, and maintained, that *all* men will be saved by virtue of their *union* to Christ, which God constituted and established from eternity, without any act or exercise of theirs. This is the last improvement upon the doctrine of *universal* salvation; and is, of all others, the most absurd and repugnant to the genius and spirit of the gospel.

But the notion of universal salvation, in every form of it, is so absurd, that it hath never met with *general* acceptance among those that have called themselves Christians. They have never adopted it as an article in any of their formulas, creeds, or confessions of faith. Even the Romish church have not embraced it. They do not imagine that every sinner will have the benefit of purgatory, but suppose multitudes are so guilty as to be sent directly to hell, and shall there remain forever. Only a few individuals have believed and propagated this doctrine in any age of the world, as Dr. Hartley frankly acknowledges. His words are these. * "It is further to be observed, that the fear of death is much increased by the exquisiteness of the punishments threatened in a future state, and by the variety of the emblems, representations, analogies, and evidences, of natural and revealed religion, whereby all the terrors of all other things are transferred upon those punishments; also by that peculiar circum-

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* Observations on Man, Vol. I. Page 467.

stance of the ETERNITY of them, which seems to have been a general tradition previous to the appearance of christianity, amongst both Jews and Pagans, and which has been the doctrine of the christian world ever since, *some very few persons excepted.*" This general disbelief of the doctrine of universal salvation bears a very dark aspect upon the truth of it. For had it been true, and plainly revealed in the sacred oracles, it is strange that the christian world could never yet be brought to embrace it; especially since it is a doctrine so every way adapted to please and gratify all the natural desires of the human heart. The belief of it would not have afforded half the evidence of its truth, as the disbelief of it, for so many ages, affords of its falsehood. There has been every thing to lead mankind to embrace it, and nothing to reject it, had it been *true*. But on the other hand, there has been every thing to lead mankind to reject, and nothing to embrace the doctrine of *eternal* punishments, had it been *false*. Therefore it is next to a miracle, that the christian world should, for so many ages, embrace the doctrine of *eternal* punishments, and reject *that* of universal salvation, had not the doctrine of universal salvation been really *false*, and *that* of eternal punishments *most evidently true*. In no case, perhaps, the general voice of the christian world ought to have more weight than in this; especially since it so fully concurs with the general

voice of scripture. We have seen that all the doctrines, declarations, precepts, promises, and threatenings of the gospel conspire to condemn the notion of universal salvation. Indeed had the Bible been written on purpose to refute it, we can hardly conceive that it could have contained any thing more plain, full, and determinate against it. And Chevalier Ramsay acknowledges, that "St. Jerom, St. Gregory, of Nyssa, St. Augustin, and St. Cyril, of Alexandria, attacked and confuted this opinion, as maintained by Origin, before the fifth general council held at Constantinople."* In short, there is every kind of evidence against it. It stands condemned by scripture, by reason, and by the general voice of mankind for more than a thousand years past.

Secondly, it appears from what hath been said, that this sentiment is not only false, but very *dangerous*.

If there be an essential difference between saints and sinners ; if they shall be separated from each other, at the last day, and eternally rewarded and punished according to their works, as we have endeavoured to shew in the preceding discourse, then the notion of universal salvation, especially as maintained by Mr. Relly and his followers, is fundamentally wrong, and absolutely fatal. Their doctrine teaches, that holiness and piety are empty names ; that faith, love, repentance,

* Philosophical Principles, 2 Vol. Page 245, & *sub finem*.

humility, and submission, are no other than hypocrisy, pride, and idolatry ; that it is impossible for a man to prevent his salvation by the most irreligious, abandoned, profligate life ; that there is no essential difference between the righteous and the wicked ; that they shall not be separated at the last day, but Cain, Pharaoh, Haman, Herod, Judas, Pilate, and all the rest of the impenitent world, shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of glory, and no human soul be finally shut out. Such a doctrine as this is replete with infinite mischief. It strikes at the root of all experimental religion. It confounds all notions of virtue and vice. It destroys all distinction of characters. It saps the foundation of morality. It takes off every restraint from vice. It opens the flood gates of iniquity. It renders even God and Christ, and the prophets and the apostles, the ministers of sin. It speaks peace to the wicked, to whom, saith God, there is no peace. It has indeed every signature of a damnable doctrine. There are many errors, no doubt, in regard to the modes and forms, and some of the doctrines of religion, which, though they cannot abide the clear light of the last great day, will not exclude men from the favour of God, or the kingdom of heaven. But this is a *practical* error of the first magnitude, which will eventually prove fatal in the day of decision. Our Lord hath so clearly described the process of the

final judgment, that we may as certainly know *now*, that all unregenerate, unholy, impenitent, unclean, impure persons shall then be condemned, as if we now stood before that awful tribunal, and heard the last decisive sentence denounced against them, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Some seem reluctant to pronounce absolutely upon the fatal tendency of this doctrine, and chuse only to say, if it be *true*, we are as safe as those who embrace it, But we ought rather to say, if there be no future judgment, then we are all safe, but not otherwise. Admit a future judgment, and there remains no room for doubt, whether God will make a difference between him that serveth him, and him that serveth him not ; between him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath. Indeed the supposition that no distinction will be made between the righteous and the wicked at the last day, wholly supercedes the necessity and even propriety of a general judgment. Why should God appoint a day, in which to judge the world in righteousness, if no persons were to be judged, no characters to be examined, and no displays of retributive justice to be made ! “ Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; for what a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption : But :

he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Did the human heart naturally prefer light to darkness, and truth to error, it would be sufficient to discover the truth and expose the error, and leave every person to follow the cool dictates of his own understanding. But since the case is quite the reverse, it becomes proper to address the hearts and consciences, the hopes and fears of men, and give divine truths all the advantages which they necessarily derive from the motives of eternity. Hence the apostles addressed mankind on the weighty concerns of the soul, with great solemnity, tenderness, and pathos. "Knowing therefore the *terror* of the Lord, we persuade men." "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Supported and directed by such examples as these, there needs no apology for addressing those who are particularly concerned in this serious subject, and warning them against the fatal dangers to which they are eminently exposed.

There are many, at this day, who are labouring to reason themselves out of the belief of all truth, both human and divine; and boast of arriving to a certainty that all things are uncertain. But it may be questioned whether the human mind, which is formed to see and feel the force of truth, will permit any man to approach nearer to perfect

scepticism, than perfect knowledge. By an habit of resisting truth, however, some may have unsettled their minds respecting divine things, at least ; and become exposed to embrace *error*, if any thing, instead of truth, in matters of religion. And for this reason, they are very liable to fall in with the delusive scheme of universal salvation, which hath a tendency to diffuse some glimmering rays of light in their dark and despairing minds. But let such be entreated to awake from their reveries, and attend to the great realities with which they are surrounded and connected. Eternal rewards and punishments are substantial realities, whether they believe them to be so or not. By shutting their eyes against them, their danger is not in the least diminished, but greatly enhanced. The period is hastening when they must be thoroughly awakened from their delusive dreams. The solemn scenes of the last day will draw the curtain aside, and open upon their astonished minds the great realities which we have described. And these objects, which, at a distance, made Felix and Belshazzar tremble, will equally shock their guilty souls, whenever their presence can no longer be resisted. A realizing sense of guilt and folly, and the divine wrath, will make any human heart stoop, and fill it with unutterable anguish, horror, and despair. O ! that they would therefore turn from such gloomy prospects, and attend to those

luminous truths, which will pour a flood of light into their ravished minds, and give them that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

There is a larger number than these, perhaps, who are making swift and bold advances in the cause of infidelity, and leave no methods unemployed to discredit divine revelation, and subvert the foundations of christianity. They need not tell the world their motives. Were they not convinced that the Bible contains the doctrine of eternal punishments, they would not wrack their inventions to find arguments to persuade themselves and others that the scriptures are a cunningly devised fable. Let this doctrine be erased from the Bible, and every deist would become its votary, and exchange his Bolingbroke, Voltaire, or Chesterfield, for that sacred volume. It is this doctrine alone that compels them to renounce a book, which bears so many signatures of divinity, and which they are compelled to acknowledge contains the most excellent instructions, institutions, and commands. But so *weak is their infidelity*, we presume they would rejoice to find the Bible on their side, to confirm their wavering hopes and feeble prospects of future happiness. And this is what the scheme of universal salvation proposes. It flatters them the Bible is their friend, and announces eternal felicity to them and to all mankind. Accordingly numbers of a deisti-

cal turn have become converts to this agreeable doctrine, and many others are eminently exposed to fall into the fatal snare. But this is flying from the iron weapon and rushing on the bow of steel. For if any discard the Bible because they imagine it does contain the doctrine of eternal punishments, or embrace it because they think it does not, they will infallibly meet with disappointment and ruin in the end. There is one way and but one, in which they may escape the wrath which is to come, and that is, by repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the only foundation of hope, that God hath provided and revealed; nor can any other foundation be laid, which will not give way, when the winds blow, and the storms of divine wrath beat upon the guilty soul.

The sons of pleasure, who indulge in every sinful gratification, find it exceedingly difficult, in their serious intervals, to stifle their natural apprehensions of guilt and punishment, and therefore readily catch hold of any thing which promises them impunity in the paths of vice. The doctrine of salvation for *all* men, without exception, or distinction of characters, perfectly gratifies their hearts, and coincides with their reigning views and pursuits. Accordingly, when this is proposed to their belief, they will, if possible, yield their assent, and shake off those painful fears of the wrath to come, through which,

they have all their life time been subject to bondage. But let them beware of this slender shelter. It will infallibly deceive and disappoint them. The agreeableness of the doctrine is a strong indication of its repugnancy to the gospel of Christ, which was never relished by persons of an immoral, profligate character. When John preached, Herod was offended. When Christ preached, the whole congregation was filled with wrath. And when Paul preached upon *righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*, the loose and abandoned Felix trembled. And it is the genuine tendency of the doctrines of the gospel to convince profligate sinners that they are in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. They may therefore be assured that the soothing doctrine of universal salvation is diametrically opposite to the truth as it is in Jesus. Let them not then listen to the pleasing delusion, and bless themselves, saying, we shall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our hearts, to add drunkenness to thirst. For the Lord will not spare them, but his anger, and his jealousy shall smoke against them, and all the curses that are written in the book of God shall lie upon them forever. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes : *But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judg-*

ment.” “ *Be not deceived* : Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.”

There is another class of men whose case borders upon despair, and calls aloud for the prayers and compassion of every pious heart ; I mean those who have renounced their former faith, and built all their hopes for eternity upon the slender foundation, *that no man can possibly be lost*. My friends, are you *certain* that without love, without faith, without holiness, you can see the Lord ? Are you *certain*, notwithstanding all the divine threatenings, there is no wrath to come ? Are you *certain*, that men cannot be under strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they may be damned ? Are you *certain* that you can appear before the judgment seat of Christ with safety ? Are you *certain* that there is no meaning in this saying of our compassionate Redeemer, “ What is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what will a man give in exchange for his soul ? ” In a word, are you *certain*, it is absolutely impossible, that your precious and immortal souls should be lost forever ? If not, what an amazing risk do you run, to suspend all your eternal interests upon a single point of *mere speculation*, which stands condemned by the concurrent voice of reason,

of conscience, of scripture, and of the christian world! But (to use nearly the words of an eminently great and pious divine) if you are determined to enquire no farther into the matter now, give me leave, at least, from a sincere concern, that you may not heap upon your heads more aggravated ruin, to intreat you, that you would be cautious how you expose yourselves to yet greater danger, by what you must yourselves own to be unnecessary, I mean, *Attempts to prevent others from believing the truths of the gospel.* Leave them, for God's sake, and for your own, in possession of those pleasures, and those hopes, which nothing but the truth, as it is in Jesus, can give them; and act not as if you were solicitous to add to the guilt of an infidel, the tenfold damnation, which they who have been the perverters and destroyers of the souls of others, must expect to meet, if those divine threatenings which they have so adventurously opposed should prove, as they certainly will, the most serious, and to them, the most dreadful truths. If I cannot prevail here, but the *pride of displaying a superiority of understanding* should bear on such readers, even in opposition to their own favourite maxims of the *innocence of error*, and the *equality of all religions consistent with social virtue*, to do their utmost to trample down the truths of the gospel with contempt; I would however dismiss them with one proposal, which I think the

importance of the affair may fully justify. If you have done with your examination into the promises and threatenings of the gospel, and each of you determine to live and conduct himself as if they were assuredly false, sit down then, and *make a memorandum of that determination*. “On such a day of such a year, I deliberately resolved, that I would live and die rejecting all *experimental* religion. This day I determined, not only to renounce all *vital piety*, but also to make it a serious part of the business of my life, to destroy, as far as I possibly can, all regard to it in the minds of others; in calm, steady, defiance of that day, when the followers of Christ say, he shall appear in so much majesty and terror to execute the vengeance threatened to his enemies.” Dare you write this, and sign it? I firmly believe that many a man, who would be thought an *Universalist*, and endeavours to increase the number, would not do it. And if you in particular dare not do it, whence does that small remainder of caution arise? The cause is plain. There is in your conscience some secret apprehension, that these opposed, these rejected, these derided truths of the gospel may, after all, *prove true*. And if there be such an apprehension, then let conscience do its office, and convince you of the impious madness of acting as if they were *most certainly and demonstrably false*. Let it tell you at large,

how possible it is that *haply you may be found fighting against God*: That, bold as you are, in defying the terrors of the Lord, you may possibly fall into his hands; may chance to hear that despised sentence, which when you hear it from the mouth of the eternal Judge, you will not be able to despise: I will repeat it again, in spite of all your scorn, *you may hear the King say to you, Depart accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

If any thing farther needs to be added, it is, by way of direction, how to shun the baneful influence of these dangerous opinions, which it is the business of some, at this day, to propagate with great apparent zeal.

And here the first thing that occurs is, to search the scriptures, which are the infallible standard of truth and error, We should carry every doctrine, which offers itself to our belief, "to the law and to the testimony," and abide that divine decision. The rule is perfect. The only danger lies in the misapplication, which indeed is too often the case. No corrupt principle of a religious nature, hath ever failed to press the Bible into its service, and claim the sanction of divine authority. But though some disjointed sentences in the word of God, may seem to countenance the most absurd and licentious opinions, and their votaries may fly to this divine sanctuary for protection; yet the sacred oracles taken in their general connec-

tion, fully reprobate every false scheme of religion, that ever has been, or can be devised. They draw such a character of the Supreme Being, of Jesus Christ, of the Divine Spirit, of the human heart, and of the genuine nature and effects of pure and undefiled religion, that the *doctrines according to godliness*, may be clearly distinguished from all their counterfeits. The scriptures in general have a plain, determinate, consistent meaning, which may be clearly understood. Therefore no two opposite doctrines of religion can both be agreeable to the word of God; but one or the other must necessarily stand condemned by it. Hence, for instance, if the doctrine of eternal punishments be really *agreeable* to the Bible, as we have endeavoured to show, then the doctrine of universal salvation is entirely *contrary* to it, and not one text that can be found, does, in its true sense, give the least degree of evidence in its favour. This being the case, there is all encouragement to search the scriptures, to see which of these two diametrically opposite doctrines is true. It would be strange indeed if this could not be determined by every *honest* enquirer. If any are in doubt therefore, we would entreat them to take heed to this sure word of prophecy, which is able to make them wise unto salvation.

In the next place, there is caution to be used against the seduction of those who propagate corrupt and dangerous sentiments. Be

not deceived by their pretensions to superior penetration and knowledge. Men of the strongest minds and most extensive literature have often committed the grossest blunders in their religious speculations, and then employed all their learning and abilities to maintain and propagate them. Some of the enemies of divine revelation, and of the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, have displayed shining talents and a profusion of learning, in pleading the cause of error, and attempting to shake the pillars of our holy religion. And many of their admirers seem to have been dazzled and allured into their snares by an implicit faith in their great abilities. But this betrays weakness. Great men are not always wise: They are liable to err; and therefore we should examine their opinions as well as those of other men, and admit them only upon the foot of real evidence.

Nor are we to be biassed in favour of men's licentious principles, on account of their amiable moral characters. It is a just observation of Dr. Brown, that men of strict morality have often disseminated the most licentious and pernicious doctrines. It is well known, that Epicurus, the father of doctrinal licentiousness, never lived up to his principles, but maintained a regular and exemplary life. Spinoza, the father of speculative *Atheism*, was a man of sobriety and apparent devotion, Lord Herbert, who was, if not the father yet the principle advocate for *Deism* in the last

century, appears to have had a serious mind, and a conscientious regard to duty. And we know that some of the advocates for universal salvation, are men of amiable natural dispositions, and fair moral characters. But ought we hence to entertain a more favourable regard for atheism, deism, or any other licentious doctrines. By no means. Those principles are still to be shunned at the peril of our souls.

Nor again, are we to believe the propagators of error, though they throw out the most pompous and solemn asseverations of their sincerity, impartiality, and uncommon intercourse with the Deity, and concern for his glory. Tho' we scruple not their sincerity, we scruple the propriety of throwing out the profession of it, which can have no tendency to enlighten, but only prejudice the minds of the credulous. This, which we venture to call an artifice, is often employed by the advocates for universal salvation. Mr. White, in his treatise on the universal restoration of all sinful creatures to the divine favour, * makes the most solemn asseverations of his sincerity and sacred regard for the divine glory. His expressions are these, " And here I do in the fear of God most humbly prostrate myself before his divine majesty, and in the deepest sense of my own darkness and distance from him, do with all my might beg of that infinite

* Page 6. 7.

"goodness I am endeavouring to represent
 "to others, that if something like this plat-
 "form and prospect of things, be not agreea-
 "ble to that revealed and natural light he
 "hath given to us, that my understanding
 "may be interrupted and my design fall, and
 "that the Lord would pardon my attempt:
 "and I know he will do so, for he hath giv-
 "en me to have no further concern for this
 "matter, than as I apprehend it to be a most
 "glorious truth, witnessed to, both by the
 "scriptures of truth and by the most essenti-
 "al principles of our own reason, and which
 "will be found at the last opening of the e-
 "verlasting gospel, to recover in that open-
 "ing a degenerate world." Mr. Relly holds
 out the same lure to his readers, to place
 an implicit faith in the rectitude of his views,
 and the divinity of his doctrines. In a pre-
 face to one volume of his writings, he assures
 his readers that his discourses were delivered
 extempore, without any previous study or
 forethought, and flowed from his lips as they
 were dictated by the divine spirit. For, says
 he, I followed that divine direction given to
 the apostles, "Take no thought beforehand
 what ye shall speak, neither do ye premed-
 itate: for it is not ye that speak, but the Ho-
 ly Ghost." How presumptuous is it for any
 man, at this day, to pretend to imitate the
 apostles in this respect! and especially for
 Mr. Relly, who in his writings every where
 ridicules all experimental religion, inward

piety, holy affections, and christian graces and tempers!

Error often employs *artifices* as truth neither needs nor approves. They sometimes, however, prove successful, and deceive the inattentive and unguarded. Those who use them therefore are dangerous persons, and their corrupting influence is studiously to be avoided. Their doctrines are fatal if imbibed; and even when they are not fully adopted, they tend to harden the heart, and stupify the conscience. The bare thought that some maintain that all will be saved, begets a secret hope that possibly it may be true, and that there is not so much danger in *impenitence* and *unbelief* as many have long imagined, and pretended. Therefore to hear the *universalists* preach, or read their writings, merely to know what they can say in defence of their errors, is like Eve's listening to the reasoning of the serpent, and may, in the event, prove equally fatal. Accordingly the scripture characterises false teachers, and warns you to avoid them. The apostle Paul, who was troubled with the perverters of the gospel, treats them with great plainness and severity. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The apo-

He John directs man to have no intimate connection with false teachers. "If any come unto you, and bring not this doctrine, that is the doctrine of Christ mentioned in the preceding verse, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." And Solomon gives a similar caution and direction. "Cease my son to hear the instruction that *causeth to err*." Thus you have not only the voice of reason, but the voice of God, to warn you to shun the presence and influence of those that lie in wait to deceive.

The last direction is, to repent and believe the gospel. This will place you beyond the reach of all fatal errors. When your hearts are established with grace, you will no longer be liable to be carried about with diverse and strange doctrines. When you yield cordial obedience to the divine will, there is a promise that shall you know of doctrines whether they be of God. When you embrace the gospel with the *heart*, it will be out of the power of Satan or any of his instruments to deceive you. When you sincerely love God, all things shall work together for your good, and prepare you more and more for the great, and glorious, and solemn scenes, which death, judgement, and eternity will soon open to your view. But so long as you remain in a state of impenitence and unbelief, you are in imminent danger of making ship-

wreck not only of your faith, but of your precious and immortal souls. Though you should escape every fatal error, and in speculation, clearly understand every doctrine of the gospel, yet if you hold even *the truth* in unrighteousness, you will certainly perish. An orthodox creed and a fair *external* appearance have no avail, in point of divine acceptance, without a broken and contrite heart, and an *unfeigned love* of the truth. For *with the heart* man believeth unto righteousness: And *without holiness* no man shall see the Lord. Therefore let the wicked forsake his way, and the *unrighteous* man *his thoughts*: And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon. Nor is there the least excuse for a moment's delay. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Life and death are now set before you. This is the only day of grace and space of repentance you will ever enjoy. You are now placed between two vast eternities of happiness and woe. You are therefore of all the creatures of God in the most critical, serious, and solemn situation. Your life, or your death, your happiness, or your misery, for a boundless eternity, is suspended on the slender thread of life. And death is advancing with rapid speed to seal up your account for the judgment of the great day; when in the view of the assembled universe, you must hear your

doom, and either rise with the righteous to mansions of eternal bliss, or sink with the wicked down to regions of eternal darkness, horror and despair! Be intreated then, O sinner, to agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him, lest he deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. !!!

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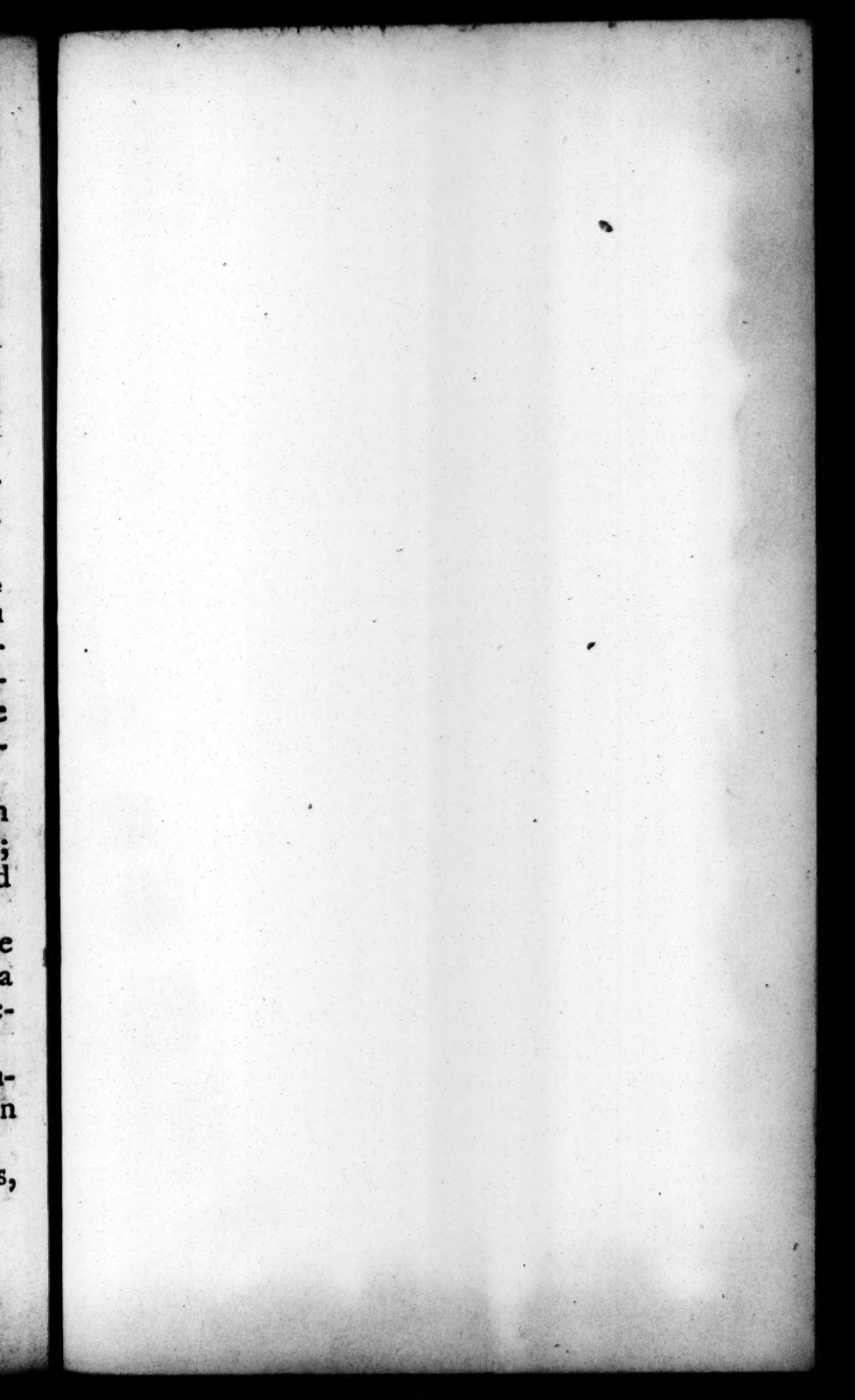
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